



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, September 24, 2002

Lobster Bisque Soup Sold at Fundraiser Unsafe for Consumption

Approximately 600 bottles of lobster bisque soup sold today - between 8:30-10:30 a.m. - at The Schmitt Resource Center, 1501 University Avenue, during a fundraising event are not safe for consumption. The Monroe County Health Department received a complaint about the product today and was also contacted by the organizers of the event once they became aware of the problem. Discussions with the organizers revealed that an unapproved canning process was used. Once officials were made aware of potential problems sales of the product were immediately stopped.

Health officials have just begun their investigation and therefore are unable to quantify the level of risk, but nonetheless, strongly discourage people from eating the soup. Foods improperly canned can lead to one of several foodborne illnesses.

The Schmitt Resource Center has cooperated fully and will make full refunds to anybody that has purchased the soup. They have begun contacting those people for whom they have contact information.

Botulism is the illness that health officials are most concerned about when canning is involved. Symptoms of botulism include double vision, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth and muscle weakness. Symptoms generally begin 18 to 36 hours after eating a contaminated food.

Health officials urge residents who ate the soup - and who subsequently become ill - to contact their doctor.

Home canning is a popular activity at this time of year. Safety tips on home canning can be accessed at: www.fsis.usda.gov.

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For More Information,
Contact: Communications and Special Events @ 428-2380
Or visit us on the web: www.monroecounty.gov

